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Lecturers and Students' Perception and Practices of Students' Presentation to Enhance Their Speaking Skills

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Article Info

Abstract

This study aimed to explain: (1) the perceptions of English lecturers of UIN Walisongo Semarang towards students' presentation in enhancing students' speaking skills, (2) the perceptions of English department students of UIN Walisongo Semarang towards students' presentation in enhancing students' speaking skills, (3) the classroom practices of students' presentation in learning English at UIN Walisongo Semarang, (4) the implementation of students' presentation in helping students to enhance their speaking skills. This study is a classroom discourse analysis which employs a descriptive qualitative approach. In order to collect the data, the researcher used personal interview, classroom observation, and open questionnaire. This study presents that: (1) the English lecturers of UIN Walisongo Semarang have good perception towards the students' presentation in enhancing the students' speaking skills. (2) the English department students of UIN Walisongo Semarang have good perception towards the students' presentation in enhancing the students' speaking skills, only some students who have negative perception. (3) there are three main stages of classroom practices of students' presentation in learning English at UIN Walisongo Semarang. Those are the presentation itself, question and answer session, and the last is getting feedback from the lecturers. (4) students' presentation brings benefits for students in helping them to enhance their speaking skills. Students are motivated to speak actively, and it encouraged them to achieve the grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, language teaching methodology is shifted from getting learners to analyse a language to getting learners to use a language. Students do not only attempted to learn the grammatical rule of language, but also they have to speak and understand the language that they learn. Moreover, in the speaking class, students are not recommended to memorize and imitate the dialogue which is provided on the text books merely; however they are supported to construct a natural communication using target language.

For gaining the objective of learning in the university, lecturers and students have to think about the appropriate technique which is implemented in teaching learning process. One of the techniques which is always used to learn English as a foreign language in the university is students' presentation. In holding students' presentation, students are attempted to read and master the subject that will be presented, make note-taking, try to synthesizing and outlining the material before they present the subject in front of the class. Thus, through using this kind of technique, students can get some benefits in developing their motivation in learning English independently, enhancing their knowledge and mastery of vocabulary (Wasiah & Carascalao, 2015). Moreover, it is able to increase the students' achievement in speaking evaluation. Students are demanded to make sentence(s) quickly using appropriate vocabulary and produce good pronunciation (Sujiyana, 2010). The researcher believe that teachers might use this technique to help their students for learning and developing their communicative competence of using a target language.

In conducting students' oral presentation at universities, both the lecturers and the students have important roles. Since the underpinning theory of this technique is communicative language teaching which has the goal to enable students to communicate in the target language (Larsen & Freeman, 2001, p. 128), rather than being a model for the target language, control the direction and pace of learning, then monitors and corrects the learners' performance, the lecturer has roles in facilitating language learning, guiding within the classroom procedure and activities, and organizing the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, pp. 98-99). Meanwhile, students have a role as communicators. They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning (Larsen & Freeman, 2001, p.129). They are expected not only to master the lesson materials, but also they have to communicate their knowledge and thinking with appropriate utterances, they should try to make themselves understood in understanding others. Students also have to know some strategies to involve the audience (questions, comprehension checks, and tasks), respond to the audience input, and use non-verbal communication such as gaze, facial expression, movement, and gesture (Cheung, 2017). For those reasons, discovering the lecturers and students' perceptions and classroom practices of student presentation technique is very crucial.

Subsequently, the researcher would like to find out the real situations of students' presentation technique which is held in the English Foreign Language (EFL) students' class and to what extent the implementation of students' presentation enhances their speaking skills. Besides mastering the material of the lesson, students are attempted to communicate what they master to their friends in front of the classmates, therefore they must be able to use correct pronunciation, speak fluently and correctly. For gaining those indicators they have to master sufficient vocabulary and should be able to arrange their sentences in order to be understood (Safari & Fitriati, 2016, p.88). However, there are some psychological problems faced by the students in speaking English such as students are afraid of making mistake, they felt ashamed, and most of them were anxious. Those problems appear because of some factors such as students were afraid if they cannot convey the message clearly and being ridiculed by their friends, and they were shy because they felt that they did not have good

pronunciation, then they were also ashamed if their friends laugh at their wrong pronunciation (Jannah & Fitriati, 2016, p.76). Those problems will prevent their performance, so that the presentation will not run well.

Hence, the role of student perceptions is of great importance in language teaching practice, so that EFL teachers have to understand students' attitudes and perceptions for the purpose of preparing and implementing an EFL curriculum and adopting appropriate teaching approaches which are learner-based (McCaslin & Good, 1996; Norris-Holt, 2002; Savignon & Wang, 2003, Richards & Nunan, 1990; Richards & Lockhart, 1994 in Faridi & Arifin, 2017, p.141). Therefore, the researcher would like to know whether the perceptions of lecturers and students of students' presentation in enhancing students' speaking skills align with the classroom practices. Then, to what extent the implementation of student presentation enhance students' speaking skills.

METHOD

This study is a classroom discourse analysis which employs a descriptive qualitative approach. It is implemented because the main objective of the study is to explain the English lecturers and students' perception towards students' presentation to enhance their speaking skills. The details which are provided in this study about the classroom practices of students' presentation as a technique to teach English at UIN Walisongo Semarang.

The subject of this study consist of four English lectures and seventy students of English department at UIN Walisongo Semarang. All of the lecturers implemented students' presentation as a technique to teach English in their class. Moreover, the seventy students have different grade, there are from 4th and 6th semester.

The instruments used in this study were observation, interview, and open questionnaire. In this case, open questions enable participants to write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response (Cohen, et.al 2007, p.321).

The researcher analyzed the data in line with the theoretical framework based on the theoretical studies chosen. They were Richard and Rodger (2014) and Larsen and Freeman (2001) for the students' presentation and Brown (2003) for the speaking skills.

In general, to analyze the data in this study involves generating natural units of meaning, classifying, categorizing and ordering the units of meaning, structuring narratives to describe the content, and interpreting the data (Cohen et.al, 2007: 470). Therefore, after collecting the data, the researcher focused on the data by referring to the formulation of the research problem and displayed those data to help her understood the findings then explained them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings presented the data obtained from the interview, questionnaire and classroom observation. It firstly described English lecturers' perceptions towards students' presentation in helping their students to enhance their speaking skills which was obtained through interviewing four of them. Furthermore, it described English language education students' perceptions towards students' presentation in helping them to enhance their speaking skills which was gained from open questionnaire. The findings gained from classroom observation presented the classroom practices of students' presentation in learning English at UIN Walisongo Semarang. In addition, it explain the implementation of students' presentation. Moreover, the discussion showed the interpretation of the collected information.

English Lecturers' Perception towards the Students' Presentation to enhance their Speaking Skills

The findings showed that English lecturers of UIN Walisongo Semarang have a good perception towards the implementation of students' presentation in enhancing students'

speaking skills. They argue that students are motivated and encouraged to drill themselves to speak up in front of the audience when they asked the students for conducting presentation.

Students, generally practice to speak or deliver the material before conducting the presentation. They are conscious that they have to understand the material and make their friends as the audience understand also. To make the audience get the point of the presentation, they have to build their speaking skills through practicing before conducting the presentation.

During the presentation, the students are demanded to explaining the material in front of the audience and it is controlled by the lecturer. They should speak up clearly in order to make the audience understand what they mean. They are forced also to build a good communication in the discussion section. The audience are allowed to give suggestion, objection, and question related to the presentation in the target language. Then, the presenters have an obligation to give respond to the audience in target language too. They are not allowed to say haphazardly, on the other hand they should argue based on the knowledge.

Students also would get feedback from the lecturers after conducting presentation related to their performance, including the speaking aspect. Some students were unconsciously used ungrammatical sentences when they deliver the material, and sometimes they were mispronounce when they discus with their friends while conducting presentation. Then, the lecturer would give some correction. It was very important to the students in enhancing their speaking skills.

However, the problem occurred when the students were unmotivated to speak. Passive presenters would only conduct monologue in delivering the material, so that they only read the slides of PowerPoint for example, without trying to construct communication with the audience, while passive audience only be good listeners, so that there were not a good discussion in the presentation. Anyway, the problem would be solved when the lecturers controlled the students' activity, for example, gave the students obligation to write some points which delivered by the presenter, ask some questions, or give some response to the presenter. Furthermore, the lecturer also should give motivation to the students to speak up in English well.

Students' Perception towards the Students' Presentation to Enhance their Speaking Skills

Thirty students (60% of the participants) stated that students' presentation is good for students in enhancing students' skill and activeness. They stated that students' presentation is encouraged them to speak up in front of the audience, although they do the mistake related to their speaking such as using ungrammatical sentences or mispronounce, they will get feedback and correction from the lecturers or their friends.

Students have an opportunity to build their knowledge and skill. They have been given a chance to perform in front of the class and get the experiences they need for their affective and cognitive development. They should able to transfer their knowledge through delivering the material and discussing it with their friends as a team or as the audience. A good team work in the students' presentation is motivate them and reduce their stress. It also help them to acquire the target language through the use of interactive group activities.

Whereas, twenty students (40% of the participants have negative perception towards students' presentation in helping them to enhance their speaking skills because some presenters just read the slides of PowerPoint and they did not present the material clearly. So that, the audience do not understand clearly about the material. Sometimes, some presenters also do not construct a natural communication with the audience, so that the audience could not achieve the intents of the presenters. Moreover, there was no positive interaction between the presenter and the audience. The audience just kept silent in the discussion section, only if there was a lecturer who controlled the students, students would be active to ask some questions.

Motivation and feedback from the lecturers is very important to support the students for learning English, in this case, to develop students' speaking skills through conducting presentation. The presence of lecturer was needed in helping the students when the students found some difficulties to speak or to present the material. The lecturer also could be a consoler or effective communicator who linked the speaker intention and the hearer interpretation through using paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback (Richard & Rodger, 2014: 99). It means that, the lecturer should guide and control the students in the implementation of students' presentation in enhancing students' speaking skills.

Classroom Practices of Students' Presentation in Learning English at UIN Walisongo Semarang

Students' presentation has given a contribution to make maximum cooperative activities involving group of students in the classroom. Trough conducting students' presentation, the lecturer have built positive relationship among students. Students are required to develop their critical thinking. They should empower their skill to achieve the goal of activities.

Students' presentation represents a language as a means on interpersonal and social interaction. In the classroom practices of students' presentation in learning English at UIN Walisongo Semarang, English department students are obliged to interact using both written and spoken language. In presenting the material, students prepared some media such as slides of PowerPoint, pictures, or media in helping them delivering the material. They, they should interact with the audience and develop their interaction during the discussion section.

Another advantages of students' presentation in the classroom practice is help the students in developing their positive interdependence and individual accountability. The students are supposed to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning. They have role as tutors, checkers, recorders, and information

sharers. All of the students in the classroom are encouraged in the classroom activity. Their participation in the classroom determine their achievement in acquiring their second language acquisition.

During the classroom practices of students' presentation, the lecturers do not act as a model or the central of learning activity. On the other hand, the lecturer is a facilitator who helps the student trough giving feedback, encouraging the groups, supplying resources, managing conflict, and observing students.

The Implementation of Students' Presentation in Helping Students to Enhance their Speaking Skills

There are three different views of input in language acquisition, those are the behaviorist, the mentalist, and the interactionist (Ellis, 1994: 243). In the behaviorist input, there are three important element which contributes to students' second language acquisition, those are stimulus, response, and reinforcement. Based on the mentalist input, students are believed to have 'a black box', they are equipped with innate knowledge of the possible forms that any single language can take, and enable learners to arrive the rules of the target language. Furthermore, according to the interactionist input, students are acquired the language trough the complex interaction of the linguistic environment.

Pedagogically, students' presentation represents Canale and Swain (1980 in Richard & Rodger, 2014: 89) theory of Communicative competence. That is the competency of students in communicate appropriately and accurately. It involves grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

Practically, the students employ their grammatical competence during the presentation. They try to arrange their utterances grammatically, so that the audience could caught their intention. They also use sociolinguistic competence. They should realize the communicative purpose of the interaction, the role relationships, and the shared information of the participants. Moreover, they

also employ discourse competence, when they should construct their meaning cohesively and coherently. Furthermore, students are encouraged to use strategic competence in the implementation of students' presentation. During the presentation, both of the presenters and the audience should realize when they have to initiate, terminate, maintain, redirect, and repair communication.

The use of students' presentation in enhancing students' speaking skills will be accomplished if the lecture and the students comprehend the approach underlying the theory, the design of the method, and their roles in the classroom practices. Although, there are some criticism of students' presentation, it could not decrease its function in helping students to enhance their speaking skills.

Based on the findings and discussion above, the researcher convinces that this study supports other findings that have been carried out by previous researchers. Through conducting students' presentation, students are able to gain some benefits especially which is related to their speaking skills, as explained by Wasiah and Carascalao (2015) that through using this kind of technique, students are motivated to enhance their knowledge and vocabulary mastery. Students' presentation also can help students to produce grammatical sentences and good pronunciation (Sujiayana, 2010). Furthermore, lecturers and students' perceptions of students' presentation has a significant role in the implementation of students' presentation as stated by Faridi and Arifin (2017, p.141).

CONCLUSION

First, English lecturers of UIN Walisongo Semarang have good perception towards students' presentation in helping their students to enhance their speaking skills. They believed that students' presentation brings some benefits to their students such as it motivates the students to drill themselves to speak before conducting the presentation, and practice to construct real communication when they conduct presentation.

In addition, English department students of UIN Walisongo Semarang have different perceptions towards students' presentation in enhancing their speaking skills. Thirty students as participants stated that they believed students' presentation can help them in enhancing their speaking skills. They believed that students' presentation encouraged them to practice to speak more. However, twenty students stated that they are not sure that students' presentation can help them to enhance their speaking skills. They stated that they believed that some students just conducted monologue or read the slides when they conduct presentation.

Furthermore, there are three main stages of classroom practices of students' presentation. Those are the presentation itself, question and answer session, and the last is getting feedback from the lecturers. In the stages of students' presentation, English lecturers and students have the same big role. As a consoler, the lecturer should be a good communicator who link the speaker intention and the hearer interpretation trough using paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback. Furthermore, students are demanded to present the material, communicate with the audience related to the topic, and build natural communication in the discussion section.

Hence, students' presentation brings benefits for students in helping them to enhance their speaking skills. Students are motivated and encouraged to practice for speaking. They have to prepare themselves to understand the material and make the audience understand what they are saying in the presentation. While conducting the presentation, they are demanded to communicate with the audience in delivering the material and in discussing the topic. After the presentations, they get the feedback from the lecturer that could help them to enhance their speaking skills.

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